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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Serpentes, Dipsadidae, *Liophis taeniogaster* Jan, 1863: Distribution extension, new state record and geographic distribution map

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ABSTRACT: The current work provides a new state record for the snake *Liophis taeniogaster* in Atlantic Forest of northeastern Brazil.

The genus *Liophis* Wagler, 1830 includes more than 30 recognized species and more than 60 subspecies distributed throughout Central and South America (Dixon 1989; Fernandes *et al.* 2002; Esqueda *et al.* 2005). In Brazil, there are currently 20 *Liophis* species (Bérnils 2010) excluding species of the recently resurrected genus *Lygophis* (Zaher 2009; Vidal *et al.* 2010). This genus is divided into some morphological complex groups as the *L. almadensis* group (Dixon and Thomas 1985), the *L. taeniurus* group (Dixon 2000), the *L. miliaris* group (Dixon 1983a), the Eastern Caribean group (Dixon 1981), and the *L. cobellus* group (Dixon 1983b).

The *Liophis cobellus* group, as currently recognized, includes four species: *L. breviceps* Cope, 1860, *L. cobellus* (Linnaeus, 1758), *L. frenata* (Werner, 1909), and *L. taeniogaster* Jan, 1863 (Fernandes *et al.* 2002). *Liophis breviceps* and *Liophis cobellus* are distributed only in northern portion of Amazon basin, while *Liophis frenata* occurs in central-southwest Brazil, east Paraguay and north Argentina (Dixon 1989; Giraudo 2001). *Liophis taeniogaster* is the most widely distributed species of this group, presenting apparently two disjoint populations, one in northeastern Brazil ranging from south Bahia to Pernambuco and Maranhão, and another one in Amazon Basin until Lomalinda, Colombia, south to Buena Vista, Bolivia, east to the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil (Fernandes *et al.* 2002).

The *Liophis taeniogaster* differs from the other snakes of the *L. cobellus* group by having eight supralabials and more than 16 maxillary teeth (*L. breviceps* has seven supralabials and less than 16 maxillary teeth), usually less than 33 ventral bands (*L. cobellus* has usually more than 43 ventral bands), and less than 168 ventral scales (*L. frenata* has more than 183 ventrals) (Fernandes *et al.* 2002).

On 08 March 2010, we collected a specimen of *Liophis taeniogaster* (Figure 1) in the city of Rio Tinto, state of Paraíba. The individual was recorded being active on an off road at 07:00 h (6°48'20" S, 35°04'39" W). Despite the snake was recorded in a disturbed area, the city is close to one of the most important reserves of northeast Atlantic forest, the Reserva Biológica Guaribas. This reserve is a patch with 4.028 ha included in the 2 % of the original forest remaining of northeast Atlantic forest (Silva and Tabarelli 2000), and encloses several fauna and flora species characteristic of the region. The Reserva Biológica Guaribas presents two different vegetation formations (Salgado *et al.* 1981): semi-deciduous rainforest (primary and secondary formation) and savanna.

FIGURE 1. *Liophis taeniogaster* from municipality of Rio Tinto, PB, Brazil (Photo by FGRF).

The snake agrees with the description of *L. taeniogaster* given by Fernandes *et al.* (2002): female with 148 mm snout-vent length, 35 mm caudal length, 2 g weight, supralabials 8/8, infralabials 10/10, dorsal scales in 17-17-15 rows; ventrals 130; cloacal divided; paired subcaudals 46. The specimen was collected (collection permits SISBIO 21799-1) and deposited in Coleção Herpetológica da Universidade Federal da Paraíba (CHUFPB, voucher number RT0005). This is the first record of this species for the state of Paraíba, Brazil (Figure 2).

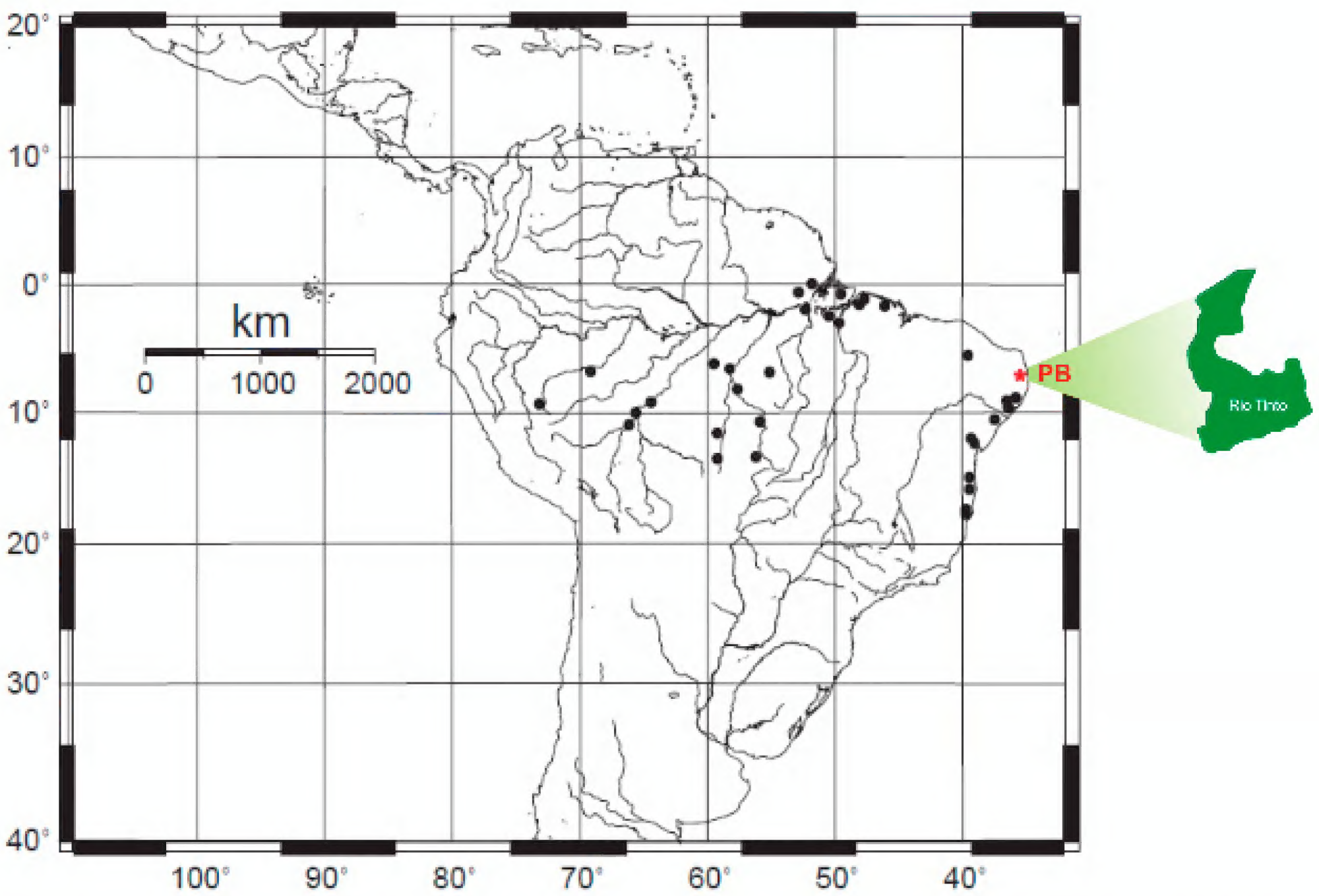

Figure 2. Geographic distribution of *Liophis taeniogaster*. Black circles represent the species distribution according to Fernandes *et al.* (2002). The red star represents the municipality of Rio Tinto, Paraíba, Brazil.

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